

REMARKS

Request for Reconsideration

Applicants have carefully considered the matters raised by Examiner in the outstanding Office Action, but remain of the position that patentable subject matter is present. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of Examiner's position based on the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

Claim Status

Claims 1-14 were withdrawn. Claims 15-18 are pending. Claim 15 has been amended herein.

Drawings

The drawings had been objected to because the cross-hatching of the component containing the hex socket 29 in Figures 9-13 had a different cross-hatching than that shown in Figures 5 and 6.

Figures 9-13 have been amended herein so that the cross-hatching in Figures 9-13 for hex socket 29 is now the same as the cross-hatching in Figures 5 and 6 for hex socket 29. Replacement sheets for Figures 9-13 are enclosed with this Response.

Claim Objections

Claims 15 had been objected to because the wording “by means of” was deemed unclear.

Claim 15 has been amended herein and “by means of” has been deleted.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 15-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nelsen, *et al.* (GB 2,301,548) and Hetmann, *et al.* (U.S. Patent 3,635,303).

In the present invention, a bolt (35) is fixed directly with a nut (22). This is accomplished because the external thread (34) of the bolt mates directly with the internal thread (33) of the nut. Moreover, the nut of the present invention has an undercut with a radial wall facing a mating flange (2), and a shank (36) which extends the nut axially. The undercut and shank also have internal threading which mates with the external threading of the bolt providing additional surface area to aid in securing the bolt. The nut is housed within a device (23). The undercut and shank extend from the nut into a mating surface on a flange (2). Thus, the external wall of the shank sits inside the flange, aiding in providing a secure connection between the two elements.

Nelsen does not anticipate the present invention because the flange of Nelsen is not fixed directly to the bolt. Rather, Nelsen discloses a screw fixed internally to a shaft and a flange fixed external to the shaft (see, Nelsen Fig. 5). Thus, unlike the present invention, the bolt of Nelsen does not directly connect the flange and the nut. Moreover, reference character A3 which was added to Figure 5 of Nelsen by the Examiner does not disclose a shank. A shank is a narrower shaftlike part, it is not a wider part of a nut as is disclosed in

Nelsen. The present invention discloses a radial wall which has a smaller diameter than the nut and a shank (see Fig. 8) which has yet a smaller diameter than the radial wall. Nelsen discloses a nut with a depression and a section of the nut that is narrower than the other end of the nut, but that is wider than a depression which abuts an internally threaded bore of Nelsen. Thus, the configuration of the present invention and Nelsen are not the same. Furthermore, the “shank” of Nelsen is not fixed internal to the flange as is shown in Figure 10 of the present invention, and the nut of Nelsen is not intended to be used in the same manner as the nut of the present invention. The nut of Nelsen is used to fix a bearing in place and not to fix a device to the flange as disclosed in the present invention. Thus, Nelsen does not anticipate the present invention.

Also, Hetmann does not anticipate the present invention because Hetmann discloses a locknut (57) fixed to a spindle (54) which is external to a screw (69). Hetmann discloses an actual nut independently positioned between a recess (16) of a rim (43) and a hub (56). Unlike the present invention, the nut of Hetmann is not formed as part of a component. The nut of the present invention is part of the device (23) and is not removable like the nut of Hetmann. Moreover, Applicants respectfully disagree that the flange and drive element of Hetmann are screwed together at least by a nut and a bolt on the drive element. The expanding screw (69) of Hetmann is only threaded at its end closest to the wheel spindle (54) collar (55). Figure 2 does not disclose any additional threading of the screw and, therefore, it is impossible for only the nut and bolt to fix the flange and drive element. The screw of Hetmann is fixed internally to the wheel spindle and the head of the screw secures the flange in place. Again, the configuration of the present invention is distinguishable.

Additionally, similar to Nelsen, the nut is not directly connected to the bolt. Here, the nut is connected to the wheel spindle (54) and not directly to the external threading of a bolt. Moreover, Hetmann discloses a bolt head located in a recess of the flange. The present invention does not disclose such a configuration; no bolt head is associated with the screw used to fix the device and flange in the present invention. Furthermore, the groove (58) of Hetmann is not an undercut as disclosed in the present invention, but rather the groove of Hetmann is a section of the nut that has a diameter which is larger than the nut. The present invention discloses an undercut with a radial wall facing a mating flange, and a shank extends the nut axially. The nut of the present invention does not disclose any section of the nut which has a diameter greater than the main body of the nut. Thus, Hetmann does not anticipate the present invention.

Therefore, neither Nelsen nor Hetmann anticipate the present invention and, thus, the present invention is patentable over the prior art made reference by the Examiner taken alone or in combination.

Claims 16-18 depend upon claim 15. It is respectfully submitted that claims 16-18 are patentable over the teachings of Nelsen and Hetmann taken alone or in combination and these rejections are now moot.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Should any extensions of time or fees be necessary in order to maintain this Application in pending condition,

appropriate requests are hereby made and authorization is given to debit Account Number 02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,
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